



Coventry Village News

October, 1987

The Newsletter of Coventry Neighbors, Inc.

Volume 11, No. 9

CNI elections are set for October 13, 7:30 at the Library

One year ago, with the Street Fair issue urging many neighbors to involvement, the CNI leadership elections were hotly contested. This year, when officer nominations were opened at the September 8 meeting, only one candidate accepted nomination. There are six offices: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two Trustees. The one candidate is Marilyn Pryor, the incumbent Secretary, who seeks that post again.

Nominations will be opened again at the meeting of October 13, which will begin at 7:30 PM at the Coventry Village Library. The election will be held that night. Only dues-paid members of Coventry Neighbors may serve as officers or vote at meetings.

It is unclear what will happen if sufficient new candidates do not come forward. This crisis comes at a time when the membership in CNI is at an all-time high, and the organization has shown a strong ability to raise funds through contributions.

The Editorship of this newsletter is also available. It comes with a total budget of about \$150 per month.

This could be the last CVN

At the CNI meeting of September 8, representatives City and School Board made presentations and answered questions about tax matters on the November 3 ballot. Attending CNI membership voted unanimously to support the School Board's levy request. One vote was cast against support for the City's parks bond issue, that by an East Cleveland resident.

CNI Vice-President Charles Owen has written to Robert Garda, the new Interim General Manager at the Regional Transit

Authority, asking for a new bus shelter at the corner of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Lancashire Road.

The shelter there is old-fashioned, made of a green corrugated material. That stop is used by a large number of transit-dependent Senior Citizens. Several of them have reported feeling unsafe in the shelter, which lacks the visibility of the glass of which newer shelters are made.

CNI urges support of school, parks levies

Our fine schools and excellent parks are essential contributors to the high quality of life in Coventry Village and in all of Cleveland Heights. Maintaining the quality of the parks and schools is essential to the continued proud identity of this community.

We urge you to vote YES on the School Board and City tax questions on November 3.

The money for which the City and School Board are asking is much-needed. The Schools are asking for a 9.5 mill operating levy; it will produce over \$4.5 million annually for current expenses. The City is asking for 2.73 mills; this will finance \$12 million in improvements and renovations to the parks. The Schools levy will cost the owner of a house worth \$50,000 about 46 cents a day; the parks bond issue will cost that same person about 12 cents a day.

Real estate professionals generally agree that nothing affects local housing values more than the perceived quality of the community school system. With this levy, our schools will be able to continue their fine tradition of educational excellence. Without the levy, the School System will be much less well equipped to meet the challenges, promises, problems, and opportunities of public education here.

continued on page 4

**Coventry Village . . .
where we all get along together
pretty well**

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir:

It used to be a joy to read the Sunday paper and share conversation in the small park in front of Coventry Yard Mall. But no more.

The place is filthy--with litter, garbage, bums, and bees. The coming colder weather will provide relief from some of these problems--but more effort is needed from the Mall management and the City of Cleveland Heights.

That park has become an embarrassment to many who live in Coventry Village. Most of the street is kept reasonably clean, but that small park is horrid. That park is prominent and highly-visible. I'm sure that negative first-impressions left by it have kept many potential patrons and residents from

returning to Coventry Village.

Isn't there something that the City government could do? Don't the Mall's owners have any pride?

The entire area suffers from their negligence. I think it's time that the City did something before the pigeons and rats replace paying citizens.

--Lisa Jones
Coventry Village

[The maintenance of this park has been discussed at several recent meetings of Coventry Neighbors. Last month, the organization resolved to ask the City for a copy of an agreement under which the Mall's management is alleged to have accepted responsibility for keeping the park clean. The matter is sure to be discussed again at the October meeting. --Ed.]

Time for Bernice Lott Award nominations

Each year, the Heights Community Congress presents the Bernice Lott Award for the outstanding citizen of Cleveland Heights and University Heights. Nominations should be sent, before November 9, to the Heights Community Congress, 2163 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118.

The winner will be announced at the annual meeting and dinner on November 15. For more information, call the Heights Community Congress at 321-6775.

Library goings-on

Starting October 9, the Coventry Village Library will be open 9 to 5:30 on Fridays. The new, extended hours--the Library is now open seven days a week--will be celebrated with an open house, 12:00 to 5:30, on October 9.

Sign-language interpreters will be in the Library during the open house to help deaf citizens learn about the services of the Library.

Sign interpretation for the deaf will also be provided for the poetry reading on Sunday, November 1, at 2:30 PM.

Maureen Weisblatt, Librarian at the University Heights Branch, will present a talk on *The Secret Life of Danny Kaye*, also signed.

Once Upon a Storytime, for young children, will be offered on Tuesdays, at 2:30 PM, from October 6 through December 15.

Preschool Storytime is offered Tuesdays at 7:30 PM and Wednesdays at 10:30 AM, October 6 through December 16.

The Coventry Village News is published monthly, except in August, by Coventry Neighbors, Inc., in cooperation with the Heights Community Congress.

Editor:
Larry Beam

Editorial Board:
Larry Beam, Charles Owen, Jeff Solomon-Hess,
Marilyn Pryor, Bruce Hennes, and Julie Washington

Editorial Staff:
Bruce Hennes and Marge Lamport

Production Staff:
Jeff Solomon-Hess, J. Lawn, Marilyn Pryor, Charles Owen, Manasses Polaski, Joe Bunda, Betty Sennenhof, and the staff of the Heights Community Congress.

Opinion expressed in these pages are strictly those of the respective writers, except where clearly identified as those of CVN, CVN, or the HCC.

Circulation: 2,000.

Anyone wishing to submit copy to the Coventry Village News may do so by sending it to the Editor, Coventry Village News, 2776 Hampshire Road, Apt. 1-B, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, 44106.

The deadline for each month is the 16th day of the preceding month. While no unsigned material will be used, names may be withheld from publication at the writer's request.
Phone: 371-6095.

Coventry Village . . .
where we all get along together
pretty well.

New owner of Irv's Deli pledges clean-up, other improvements

On September 24, Dianne Javier took over Irv's Deli, 1798 Coventry Road. She promises many improvements to the business--first, a lot of cleaning-up. Ms. Javier plans to seek a liquor license, and to reopen the bar, which has been closed since the spring of 1983, following a local option vote.

Ms. Javier will retain the present name of the business. "The name needs as much cleaning-up as the place itself," she says. "But it's the name of an institution, and it's known all over the metropolitan region, and I think it's worth saving, despite the trouble."

There will be some changes to the menu, but no wholesale revisions, Ms. Javier said. The business offers sandwiches from a Kosher-style deli counter, pizza, ribs, and a wide assortment of burgers and dinners. Fresh breads and pastries are supplied by Lax & Mandel, the rigorously Kosher bakery on South Taylor Road.

Ms. Javier is considering installing ironwork on the top of the planters that surround the building. A similar proposal, intended to make the planters uncomfortable for sitting, was first offered several years ago. People who sit for hours on the planters that surround the business have been a substantial annoyance to area residents and visitors.

The problems have been especially severe on summer nights, when drug dealing and harassment of women have been routine. The previous owner of the business denied any responsibility for what took place around

Aware of responsibility to the community . . .

the planters. Ms. Javier expresses an awareness of her responsibility to the community--and clearly understands the harm to the business itself that's done by rude and truculent hangers-out.

She has taken the first steps toward participation in the store front renovation program offered by the City of Cleveland Heights, through the Local Development Corporation.

Ms. Javier paid no cash for the business; she merely assumed its debts. Her background is in accounting and sales. A five-

year period during which she had family ties to Coventry Beverage and Pizza gave her familiarity with the neighborhood.

Irv Gulko, proprietor of Irv's since 1958, will retain ownership of the building. He had been seeking a buyer for over two years. He was at first asking more than \$900,000 for the building and business. --LB

Six buildings get City help for renovations

More than \$120,000 in Federal Community Development Block Grant money will subsidize the renovation of six Coventry Village apartment buildings. Much of the work will be done before the end of this construction season. An additional four buildings may join the renovation parade this season.

The City of Cleveland Heights offers subsidies, along with some technical assistance, through the Apartment Renovation Rebate Program, formerly known as the Apartment Improvement Program.

Perhaps the most dramatic of these renovation projects is the elegant renovation work done to the building at 2773 Hampshire Road, owned by Alan Rubenstein. The City's contribution to that project will be about \$27,000.

Other projects benefiting from the program are Lew Zipkin's buildings at 2764 and 2768 Lancashire, and 2713 Hampshire. The two Lancashire Road buildings will receive about \$16,000 in subsidies; assistance to the Hampshire Road building will be about \$21,000. Work is in progress on these three.

A building owned by Ed Silver, at 2441 Overlook Road, will receive \$12,000. A rebate of \$27,800 will be paid to Larry Davis for improvements to his building at 2517 Overlook.

Jay Gardner, who administers this program for the City's Planning Department, expects as many as four more buildings to participate in the program before the construction season ends. Among these are a building owned by Jeff Glass, at 2460 Overlook; one owned by Charles Owen, at 2745 Hampshire; and the Ruth Building, at 2752 Hampshire Road, which was recently purchased by Paul Maron. --LB

**Coventry Village . . .
where we all get along together
pretty well**

Vote YES on levies

[Continued from page one]

The age of the parks in Cleveland Heights reflects the age the city's housing stock and commercial buildings. As with fine old houses, there comes a time when routine maintenance is not enough. Major renovation, repair, and updating are needed in the parks, just as in homes, apartments, or commercial buildings.

Of the \$12 million budget for parks work, about \$180,000 is allocated for the re-doing of the mini-park in front of the Coventry Yard Mall. Another Coventry Village landmark, the Recreation Pavilion, will be made energy-efficient, and its air-conditioning and ice-making equipment will be improved so that the ice skating season can be extended. An elevator will be installed in the building, and a Senior Activities Center will be added.

At Cumberland Park, the War Memorial will receive badly-needed renovation, including lighting and landscaping. The pool will be repaired, the wading pool renovated, and the bathhouse improved.

Perhaps the most dramatic project to be funded with the proposed bond issue is the addition of a canopy over the stage and seating at the Cain Park Amphitheater. There will be new seating there, and the Alma Theater will get louvered walls and mechanical ventilation.

These and many other improvements to the parks all over Cleveland Heights make this bond issue a value to its citizens.

Vote for it. And vote for the school levy.
—Larry Beam, CNI President

Recycling Program will continue with support of George Gund Foundation

A grant of \$4,600 from the George Gund Foundation will allow the Heights Citizens for Recycling (HCR) to continue its monthly collections of glass and aluminum. The grant is designed to make the program self-supporting, according to Lee DeAngelis, President of HCR.

Management and promotion of the program is achieved through the cooperation of HCR and the City of Cleveland Heights. The actual collection of aluminum will be done by the West Boulevard Neighborhood Association, which operates a recycling center in Cleveland.

The Cleveland Heights recycling program can be self-supporting if the volume of materials contributed to it doubles.

DeAngelis is confident that the people of Cleveland Heights will make this volume increase possible.

Gary Peters, Recycling Coordinator for the City of Cleveland Heights, emphasizes the importance of recycling. "With landfills reaching capacity, recycling is going to become a part of our life. Waste disposal costs the City over \$50 per ton, and is expected to increase," Peters says. He feels that a self-supporting program, following the fashion of public-private partnership, could become a model for other communities.

Glass and aluminum are gathered on the second Saturday of each month, 10 AM to 2 PM, in the parking lot of the skating rink, on Mayfield Road between Superior and Monticello. Tops must be removed from glass containers, which should be rinsed and sorted by color.

Those who bring glass or aluminum to the program may receive cash, or may make a donation of the amount to charitable organizations that register with the City's recycling office. For more information, call 291-2622.

Psychic benefit for CYC

Professional psychics will provide readings in numerology, palmistry, psychometry, tarot, and astrology at a fundraiser for the Coventry Youth Center (CYC) on Saturday, November 14, 3:00 to 10:00 PM. The event will be held at the home of Saul Isler, and tickets cost \$35.

Hors d'oeuvres and wine will be offered.

A raffle will be held at the event. First prize will be a past life regression (to be scheduled for a future date). Other prizes are a full astrology reading and a crystal.

Psychic services are not provided to the youth who attend the Center. Attendance at the benefit will be limited. To reserve a place, send your name and address and the number in your party to the Coventry Youth Center, 1925 Coventry Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118.

Improvement Awards

Winners of the annual Community Improvement Awards will be announced at a ceremony on Sunday, October 18, at the Jewish Community Center, 3505 Mayfield Road. The event is open to the public.

These awards are a joint effort of the City of Cleveland Heights and the Heights Community Congress.

Around Coventry . . .

Mr Hero, part ii . . . Raj Mathur wants to put a "Mr. Hero/Mr. Philly" restaurant in the location of his failed restaurant called Coventry Cafe, which was at first called Taj Mahal, at 1763 Coventry Road, near Mayfield. Mathur's request will be heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) on Wednesday, October 21. That hearing, which will be open to the public, will be at City Hall. Mathur has been invited to share his plans with Coventry Neighbors on October 13.

Mathur says the expected cost of the project is \$250,000. He writes that the project "will be great asset [sic] to the area and contribute significantly and positively to the image of the Coventry Business District." Which is about what he said when got the BZA to approve the Taj Mahal. Mr. Mathur himself would operate the franchise.

Included in a packet of materials Mathur recently provided to the City are copies of drawings made last year by Lajos Szabo, the Columbus-based architect who designed the Bistrot des Artistes. The drawings were commissioned by Alton Doody, proprietor of the Bistrot des Artistes, at a time when he considered purchasing Mathur's building, and installing his own restaurant there. The drawings show the building elegantly renovated, with awnings over all windows.

Mathur says in the document he gave the City that he needs the expected profits of the Mr. Hero restaurant to finance the renovations shown in Szabo's drawings.

Mathur points to the prominence of the building, which stands in full view of the many thousands who pass by along Mayfield Road each day.

Some of us have watched that prominent building become the neighborhood's worst eyesore during the years that Mathur has owned it. Full of viable business tenants before he bought it, the building has stood mostly empty in recent years. Mathur's refusal to provide heat drove tenants from the building's second floor. A retail store downstairs was kept warm last winter with a petroleum-fueled portable space heater.

Work that Mathur has done to the building shows a very low quality of workmanship.

Nothing in Mathur's performance reflects the caring and pride that are so essential to neighborhood commercial revitalization.

We see no reason to believe that a Mr. Hero franchise would make Mathur clean

up his act. We hope that the BZA will share this view.

Planning parking . . . Parking improvements, once slated for this construction season, won't get started until next spring at least. Costs and complexity have gone up again.

The first plans were for a rather simple bit of reorganization for the parking lot across from Tommy's Restaurant, next to Coventry Beverage and Pizza. About two dozen parking spaces could be gained, at a cost of less than \$80,000. Council allocated \$80,000 for the project.

Planning efforts hit their first snag this spring when City staffers realized that the City does not own a strip of land about ten feet wide, along the south side of Coventry Beverage. A row of nose-in parking spaces were planned there. Leo Weiss, spokesman for the owners of the needed land, wouldn't return phone calls from the City's planners. Now, a summer later, the easement negotiations are in the hands of the City's law department.

Then the price jumped \$100,000 or so when the City decided that the lot's paving should be re-done from the ground up.

Now the cost estimate has gone up by roughly *another* \$100,000. This is to rebuild the retaining walls at the rear of the site. These walls are leaning seriously and badly deteriorated; the recommendation that they be rebuilt came from an outside consultant.

The additional funding is being sought, at least in part, from the Community Development Block Grant program.

Post-mortem . . . Postal service received by the CVN reached an all-time low last month. About 750 copies were placed in the Postal Service on Monday, September 1. Only a few subscribers received it before the Coventry Neighbors meeting on Tuesday September 8. Some readers on Washington Boulevard got their copies on the 9th. Some readers on Hampshire Road, west of Coventry, had to wait until the 14th.

We have repeatedly complained to the Postal Service about this slowness. But to no avail.

We regret the inconvenience that this slowness may have caused. We invite you to let us know when you get this newsletter. It will go in the mail on Monday, October 5.

--Ed.

**Vote for the school
and parks levies.**

Coventry Neighbors, Inc.
c/o The Heights Community Congress
2163 Lee Road
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118

Non Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Cleveland, Ohio
Permit No. 1441

ADDRESS
CORRECTION
REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL--PLEASE DELIVER BEFORE OCTOBER 9

The next regular meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc., will be held on Tuesday, October 13, at the Coventry Village Library, 7:30 P.M.

The next meeting of the trustees of Coventry Neighbors, Inc., will be held on Thursday, November 5. Call for time and location. The meeting is open to all dues-paid members.

Join Coventry Neighbors, Inc. today! You must be a member for at least 30 days to vote at our meetings. Join now. All memberships and newsletter subscriptions expire at the end of each year.

Please indicate the class of membership you want:

Individual (\$3.50) Family (\$5.00) Senior (\$1.50)
 Just a subscription to the *Coventry Village News* (\$2.50)

I would like to make an additional, tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____

NAME _____ PHONE _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Are you now receiving the CVN by mail? _____

Please return this form with your check to:
Coventry Neighbors, Inc.
2776 Hampshire Road, #1-B
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106